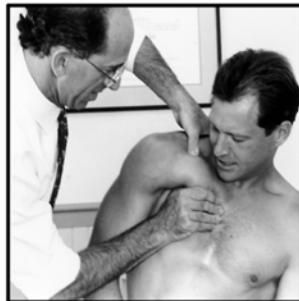


# BREAKING THE PAINFUL TIES THAT BIND

Neuromuscular re-education can free up muscles and joints to get you moving again

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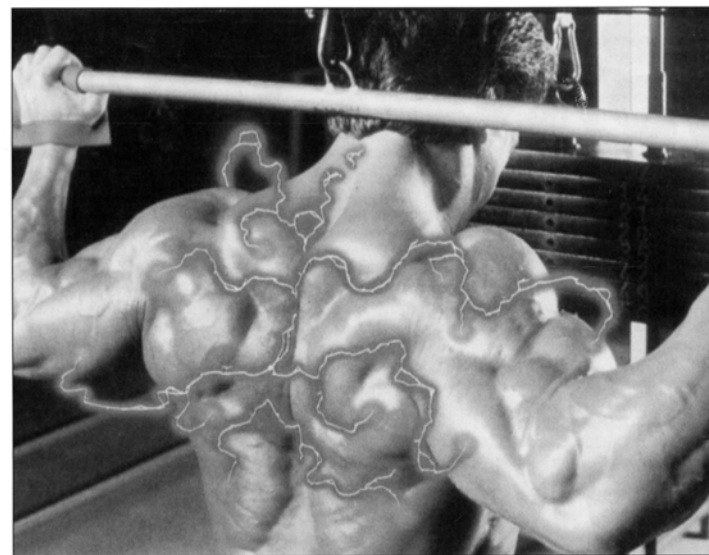


I started lifting weights seriously when I was 15. I've continued as regularly as I could, given the constraints of a military career and lifestyle, for 24 of the last 30 years. I mean seriously enough that by the time I was in my early 20s I was pushing around some substantial weights. Then, like now, everyone wanted to be big. I was no exception. And in the belief that more weight meant more mass, more often than not, form was quietly sacrificed to quantity of iron moved in a give direction.

I had no instruction when I first got going, but was lucky enough not to suffer any serious problems. There were injuries of course, minor muscle pulls or ligament sprains, but nothing that ever slowed me down for an extended period. The hallmark of youth is resiliency and I bounced back from everything. At least I thought so.

In the last few years, though, I have to admit that I began to ache in a lot of

If thorough warm-ups, stretching, balanced training and good form don't keep you functioning at your peak, don't quit. Consider NMR.



different areas. At first, it was pretty localized, mainly in my shoulders and low back. But over time the ache became a dull, low-grade, pretty-much-constant state of my body. You know...you get out of bed a little slower and feel a bit stiff, creaky...you do a stretch and hear tissue crackle as you rotate your shoulders or hear your joints pop when you work your neck around. What's worse is when you stretch and you can't even get loose enough to pop a few bones and get some release. Some areas just don't move, and the thought passes through your head that this might just be the beginning of "losing that flexibility" that you've always had.

The truth is that my neck didn't move easily, both shoulders have hurt for 20 years on and off, the area between my shoulder blades felt locked up, my knees bothered me whenever I started using over 300 pounds for squats (even though I can easily do 20 reps with that weight and am always extremely careful about form and warm-up), and my low back had likewise been more and more of a problem over the past 10 years. And all this despite making sure over the years that I stretched correctly on a regular basis and that I balanced the work I did around and across each joint (i.e., balanced pushing movements with pulling, benches with rows, etc.).

This was not how I had intended to feel and I didn't like it. About a month

ago a friend of mine told me that there was a chiropractor in Santa Barbara doing some deep tissue work in addition to manipulation and that the results were impressive in the speed with which many problems, both acute and chronic, were cleared up. He had just opened a second office in Santa Monica. Now, I haven't had much experience with chiropractors, and it was a 45-60 minute drive each way, but curiosity and hope prompted me to make an appointment.

## "YOU'RE BORN LOOSE"

Dr. Peter Levy met me and brought me into a treatment room, where he took my medical history and performed an exam using primarily eccentric muscle tests, and static and dynamic palpation of the joints. I asked him what he considered the standard of health. "Flexibility," he said at once. "Musculoskeletal, chemical and emotional flexibility. You're born loose and you die stiff. Any loss of motion in between is a loss of vitality, a loss of function. Maybe just at a microtraumatic/microscopic level most of the time, but it adds up to a point where either you injure yourself pushing your newly restricted limits of joint and tissue tensile strength, or you find you just can't do what you used to and you don't know where it went."

I understood him exactly. That's precisely how I had been feeling for the last several years.

The exam included not just my neck, shoulders and low back but everything in between. Muscles are links in a chain of joints; they act together and are apt to suffer together; this is especially true of muscles on the sound side of the body which have a tendency to overwork.

"The key to understanding the technique I use, called Neuromuscular Re-education, is knowing about adhesions," Levy said.

All of a sudden the light bulb flashed on: This was the doctor that Dr. Gary Glum, cofounder of the Institute of Neuromuscular Re-education, had handpicked to carry on his work. Working with Joe Hourigan, Glum had developed this technique to market to insurance companies as a way of reducing treatment costs with less time off and longer lasting results. As it turned out, there didn't seem to be much of a market for them in the world of big business, but soon world class athletes, including a great number of competitive body-builders and powerlifters, were knocking on their door. Not long after that, Glum stopped practicing and turned his interests to writing a book on a cancer cure.

As Levy worked on my muscles and joints, he continued his explanation of the process.